Increase in the Price of Rubber

663. SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI :
KUMARI ALIA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) wheter Government propose to increase the prices of natural rubber ;

(b) wheter it is proposed by Govt. to fix the administered prices of rubber during the July-August each year ; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Government has been announcing revision in the Bench Mark Price of natural rubber (RMA- 4 grade) based on the cost study reports of the Cost Accounts Branch of the Ministry of Finance from time to time. The study takes into account the increases that have taken place in the cost of various inputs for production of natural rubber. The present Bench Mark Price of Rs. 21,450 per metric tonne was fixed on 1st January, 1991 on the basis of the recommendations of the Cost Accounts Branch.

(b) and (c) There is no proposal to fix administered prices of rubber during July-August each year. However, due to reported increases in various inputs, a fresh cost study has recently been carried out and the same is being examined by Government.

Export of Leather Products

664. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what has been the value of export of leather products during the last five years ;

(b) what has been the gap between the demand and availability of finished leather during the above period ;

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to develop technology required for this sector ; and

(d) what are the details of the scheme regarding manpower development for leather industry ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) The value of export of leather products (footwears, footwear components, garments and other leather goods excluding finished leather) during the last five years has been as follows :

(Rs. in Crores)

Year	Exports
1987-88	686.29
1988-89	913.49
1989-90	1315.44
1990-91	1808.22
1991-92	2460.00 (Provisional)

(*Source* : Council for Leather Exports)

(b) No reliable data on demand and availability of finished leather is available prior to the period 1990-91. However, in the context of preparation of 8th Five Year Plan, the Working Group on Leather and Leather Goods Industries had estimated the demand and availability of finished leather as under :

(in Million SFT)

Year	Requirement	Availability	Deficit
1990-91	1445	1375	70
1994-95	1803	1593	210

(*Source* : Report of the Working Group on Leather and Leather Goods Industries for the Eigth Five Year Plan).

(c) and (d) The steps taken by the Government include facilitating the import of machinery, equipment and raw material, building up of infrastructural facilities, imparting design and development training for technicians under various international assistance and cooperation projects. A four-year UNDP assisted Leather Sector Programme has also come into operation with effect from 1-4-1992. The objectives of this programme include man-power development strengthening R&D Capacity to facilitate product and technology development etc. The Government has also set up a Footwear Design and Development Institute at Noida whose objectives include manpower development and imparting training at various levels.

Target for boosting rubber exports

665. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) wheter it is a fact that Government have fixed any specific targets for boosting rubber exports ;

(b) if so, whether rubber board has been involved in this deal ;

(c) what are the details of the specific targets fixed ;

(d) what are the details of the production and exports of natural rubber made during the last three years ;

(e) whether it is a fact that natural rubber is facing a tough competition from the synthetic rubber ; and

(f) if so, what efforts have been made, so far, to popularise the use of natural rubber ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c) Till recently, there was no regular export of natural rubber. On 17th January, 1992 Government allowed export of 14,000 MTs of natural rubber consisting 3000 MTs of centrifuged latex (dry rubber content), 5000 MTs of ISNR—20 grades of crumb rubber and 6000 MTs of off-grade rubber (other than RMA-4 and RMA-5 grades) by private exporters, keeping in view the surplus availability and to arrest the decline in prices at that time. The Rubber Board was made the agency to monitor the ceiling in respect of the export of this 14,000 MTs of natural rubber.

(d) The details of the production and exports of natural rubber made during the last three years are as under :—

Year	Production (Tonnes)	Export (Tonnes)
1989-90	2,97,300	Nil
1990-91	3,29,615	Nil
1991-92 (Estimated)	3,65,000	5834

(e) and (f) At present in India general purpose synthetic rubbers are almost twice as costly as natural rubber and therefore, the question of facing tough competition does not arise.

Export of Marine Products

666. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what are the details of the quantity and value of exports of marine products during the last 3 years, year-wise ; and

(b) what steps are proposed to be taken by Government to increase the quantum of exports of marine products during the Eighth Five Year Plan period ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) The export of marine products during the last 3 years were :

(in Mts.) (Rs. crores)

Year	Qty.	Value
1989-90	110843	635
1990-91	139419	893
1991-92 Provisional	172800	1375

Source : — MPEDA Cochin)